

# AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURES OF SPEECH IN SONG LYRIC OF THE ALBUM THIS IS WHY BY PARAMORE

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## Abstract

This final project is based on the study which analyzed the figures of speech used in song lyrics of Paramore's album. The objectives of the study are to identify the types and meaning of each figures of speech found in song lyrics of Paramore's album and to explain the contribution of this study to teaching poetry. This study is a qualitative research. The object of this study is seven song lyrics of Paramore. They are *This Is Why*, *The News*, *Running Out Of Times*, *Big Man Little Dignity*, *Figure 8*, *Liar*, and *Thick Skull*. In analyzing and collecting data, the writer did some steps. First, the writer reading and documenting the song lyrics to understand well the song lyrics about. Second, the writer identifying and classifying the data and finds the meaning of figures of speech to solve the statement of the problems correctly. Then, the writer found the contribution of figures of speech in Paramore's album to teaching poetry. The result of this study indicates that there are forty three figures of speech expressions. There are six expressions of symbol, eighteen expressions of metaphor, one expression of allusion, three expressions of simile, one expression of repetition, six expressions of irony, three expressions of hyperbole, two expressions of personification, one expression of paradox, one expression of oxymoron, and one expression of litotes. Then, after knowing the meaning of figures of speech in every sentences, the writer understands some messages of Paramore's song lyrics. The song lyrics talk about life, love, growth and discovery. Therefore, the writer assumes that Paramore's song lyrics can be used as materials in teaching poetry because the song lyrics contain many figures of speech and easy language. So, the students can recognize and understand about figures of speech easily. In addition, the song lyrics make the teaching and learning process lesson easier for both lecturer and students. And the figures of speech can improve students vocabularies, encourages active engagement and interpretation skills among the students.

**Keywords:** Figures of speech, song lyric, types of figures of speech, album This Is Why by Paramore.

## **a. Introduction**

In order to cooperate and survive within a community, individuals must allocate their essential needs. Language plays a crucial role in this process, serving as a vital tool for communication and expressing ideas or information. Without language, establishing connections among humans becomes challenging as there is a lack of understanding regarding the thoughts and intentions of others. The absence of communication and the inability to share ideas or information hinder the progress of knowledge. Moreover, language can also be observed in the form of song.

A song is a musical composition that is performed with rhythmic singing. It typically features aesthetically pleasing lyrics, which are structured in couples or verses commonly referred to as lyrics. According to Barnet et al. (2006:697), a lyric originally denoted a song accompanied by a lyre. The composer writes the lyrics of a song based on their personal emotions and experiences, whether it be feelings of happiness, sadness, confusion, or love.

When individuals read the lyrics of a song, some may understand the meaning behind the words, while others may struggle to do so. However, some students may overlook the meaning of song lyrics due to the presence of connotation, where figures of speech is often employed, making interpretation challenging. Songs, particularly those by artists like Paramore, offer a convenient pathway since they frequently utilize various figures of speech.

While learning figures of speech through songs can be relatively straightforward, understanding the meaning behind the lyrics is often not a simple task. Many college students face challenges in interpreting, comprehending, and identifying the figures of speech used in song lyrics. When listeners engage with music and make an effort to examine and understand the lyrics, they come across various figures of speech within the verses. Therefore, in this sense, listeners embark on a process of actively searching for and attempting to interpret the intended meaning conveyed through the song's lyrics.

Figures of speech are essential elements in the creation of song lyrics, contributing to their appeal and enjoyment when sung and listened to. Thus, the introduction of songs as a learning tool provides teachers with a novel medium to teach and analyze figures of speech, effectively preventing student boredom. In incorporating music into the learning process, students actively engage with the material, fostering interest and participation.

A wide range of figures of speech exists, including synecdoche, simile, personification, irony, hyponymy, hyperbole, apostrophe, metaphor, and more. In general, figures of speech can be categorized into four groups: confirmation, comparison, opposition, and allusion. These figures of speech enjoy popularity both in society and within the realm of education, being taught from elementary school all the way up to university level. While people are generally aware of the concept of figures of speech, they may not be familiar with the specific types of figures of speech. However, this analysis aims to identify figures of speech specifically within song lyrics, particularly those of a renowned male singer.

Therefore, the writer has selected Paramore's songs as a focus because the lyrics in his album "This Is Why" contain numerous types of figures of speech. Thus, exploring these songs, students have the opportunity to encounter and analyze various figures of speech, leading to a deeper understanding and an expansion of their knowledge in this area.

## **b. Literature Review**

### **Figures of Speech**

A figure of speech, in this sense, is defined as a linguistic device that utilizes words or phrases to convey meanings beyond their literal or conceptual definitions. It involves the use of identification, comparison, or association with something familiar to the audience, creating connotations or symbolic meanings. According to Sharndarma and Suleiman (2013:2), figures of speech are expressions where words are employed to connote something other than their literal or conceptual meanings. Figures of speech allow readers to interpret the writer's intended meaning using their own perceptions and understanding. They play a significant role in providing vivid imagery and enhancing the reader's experience when listening to a song. Figures of speech also involve the use of language that deviates from literal and denotative meanings, aiming to evoke additional effects or convey deeper messages.

Figures of speech encompass a wide range of literary devices that add depth and creativity to language. Some common types of figures of speech include:

- **Simile**

According to Kennedy and Gioia (2005: 121), a simile is a comparison between two things, typically indicated by connectives such as "like," "as," "than," or verbs like "resembles." It expresses a similarity between the two things being compared. Murray and Moon (2006: 6) share a similar view, stating that similes are very similar to metaphors but with one important difference: the comparison is explicitly stated. Similes are introduced or signaled by words like "like," "as," "compare," "resemble." Similes are announced comparisons.

For example :

"I wear my patience like a light-green dress - Remembering the Ardeche" by Emily Grosholz, the word "like" is used to indicate a simile.

- **Metaphor**

According to Kennedy and Gioia (2005: 702), a metaphor is a statement where one thing is described as something else, implying a comparison or resemblance between the two. Murray and Moon (2006: 2) suggest that metaphors involve using language to refer to something beyond its original or literal meaning, in order to establish a connection or convey similarity between the two things.

Metaphors employ specific words like “is,” “are,” “was,” or “were” to create a vivid mental image, without the use of “like” or “as” for comparison.

Example :

- “My love is a red, red rose.”
- “My love has red petals and sharp thorns.”

- **Personification**

According to Kennedy and Gioia (2005: 128), personification is a figure of speech that involves giving human qualities to things, animals, or abstract terms such as truth or nature. It occurs when something inanimate is portrayed as having human qualities or the ability to perform human actions. Here are two additional examples of personification:

- “15 years later the company moved into the friendly glass and brick building in Wellington Circus, with its almost circular auditorium designed by Peter Moro.”
- “The wind began to scream, and we could see the tops of the long-leaved pine trees doing a mad dance against the black sky.”

- **Hyperbole**

According to Kennedy and Gioia (2006: 129), a hyperbole is a statement that is exaggerated to such an extreme extent that it is not believed to be true. It is also referred to as an overstatement, as it uses exaggeration to emphasize a point. For example:

- “Dad drank a million gallons of water after his run.”
- “I know I changed the baby's diaper a thousand times.”

- **Irony**

According to Bradford (2002:22), irony, along with other tropes, is a pervasive aspect of human life. Irony refers to an expression where the intended meaning by the author or speaker is significantly different, often opposite, to what is literally stated. Here are examples of irony:

- “A traffic jam when you are already late.”
- “A no smoking sign on your cigarette break.”

- **Allusion**

According to Wikipedia, allusion refers to making a reference to a historical or literary event or person that bears a significant resemblance to the subject being discussed. Allusion is frequently employed in prose writing. Here are examples of allusion:

- “She transformed her backyard to look like the garden of Eden.”
- “His wife was his Achilles’ heel.”

- **Litotes**

Litotes is a figure of speech that involves deliberate understatement or the denial of the contrary. It is used to emphasize a point by stating the negative opposite of

what is meant, often conveying a stronger meaning through subtle negation. Here are examples of litotes:

- "New York is not an ordinary city."
- "A million dollars is not a little amount."

- **Paradox**

Kennedy and Gioia (2005:130) explain that a paradox is a statement that initially appears self-contradictory but, upon reflection, reveals some underlying sense. In other words, it is a statement that seems contradictory.

- "The person who wrote something so stupid cannot write at all."
- "Nobody goes to that restaurant because it is too crowded."

- **Oxymoron**

According to Murthy (2003:507), an oxymoron is a figure of speech that combines two contradictory qualities or ideas within the same expression. It involves using words that are opposite in meaning to create a contrasting effect.

- "Takes a big man to play a little guitar."
- "Big man's afraid of a little mouse?"

- **Symbol**

A symbol is an object or word that represents more than its literal meaning. It can be found in various forms, such as government flags, religious symbols, objects with personal significance, logos, and even college sweatshirts. Symbols can be categorized into personal symbols (objects with personal meaning), public symbols (flags), and conventional symbols (using roads to represent life's journey to symbolize stages of life). Symbols are open to personal interpretation (Frank, 2002: 95).

An example of poetry by Robert Frost:

### **Stopping by Woods on A Snowy Evening**

Whose woods there are I think I know,  
His house in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.  
My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.  
He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.

The only other sound's sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.  
The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

The horse in this context carries a symbolic dimension that goes beyond its ordinary representation. Unlike a literal horse, it has the ability to impact the behavior and attitudes of its owner. The horse's expressions awaken the surrounding world from its distractions, revealing the beauty that had previously gone unnoticed. It serves as a reflection of its master's inner struggle between the enticing external world and the inner voice urging them to return home. The horse symbolizes consciousness and enlightenment, highlighting the distinction between selfishness and a collective connection with the primal environment.

### **c. Method**

This study was classified into a descriptive qualitative study because the collection and analysis of data was in form of sentence than number. The study employed a research approach known as discourse analysis. The writer's role involved selecting the data source, determining the study's focus, and drawing conclusions based on the findings. For the data analysis, the writer used method from Creswell.

The focus of the study was on the song lyrics from Paramore's album titled "This Is Why." Although the album contains twelve songs, the writer chose to analyze only seven of them. This selection was based on the popularity and lyrical beauty of these particular songs. The chosen songs include "This Is Why," "The News," "Running Out Of Times," "Big Man, Little Dignity," "Figure 8," "Liar," and "Thick Skull." These songs were deemed significant for their impact and the meaningful words they convey.

In this research, the researcher used four songs taken from Paramore's album This Is why. The song lyrics become tools in content analysis to analyze figures of speech and to describe the meaning of the songs. The steps used by the writer in collecting the data are as follows:

1. Reading the song lyrics of the "This Is Why" album.
2. Documenting instances of figures of speech within the lyrics.
3. Identifying the collected data.
4. Classifying and organizing the data into different categories.

Grouping the data based on classification.

#### **d. Finding and Discussion**

##### **a. The Type of Figures of Speech found in This Is Why album by Paramore.**

The writer focus on the most significant findings from the study in this section. The writer attempted to identify figures of speech in the data. The analysis involved classifying every word to determine the various figures of speech as follows:

**Table 4.1 Type of Figures of Speech in the song lyric album This Is Why**

No	Type of Figurative Language	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Metaphor	18	41,8%
2.	Symbol	6	14%
3.	Irony	6	14%
4.	Hyperbole	3	7%
5.	Simile	3	7%
6.	Personification	2	4,7%
7.	Allusion	1	2,3% %
8.	Repetition	1	2,3%
9.	Paradox	1	2,3%
10.	Oxymoron	1	2,3%
11.	Litotes	1	2,3%
	Scores	43	100%

It can be stated, that the dominant type of figures of speech found on the album This Is Why by Paramore was Metaphor (41,8%).

Picture 4.1 states that the dominant figures of speech found was Metaphor (41,8%), followed by Symbol and Irony held the same percentage (14%) also Hyperbole and Simile (7%).

The writer's conclusions indicate that the lyrics of 7 songs from the "This Is Why" album contained eleven different forms of figures of speech: metaphor (18 data), symbol (6 data), irony (6 data), hyperbole (3 data), simile (3 data), personification (2 data), Allusion (1 data), repetition (1 data), Paradox (1 data), Oxymoron (1 data) and litotes (1 data).

A simile (Kennedy and Gioia, 2005) is a comparison between two things, typically indicated by connectives such as "like," "as," "than," or verbs like "resembles." It expresses a similarity between the two things being compared. However, for a simile to be present, the compared things must be dissimilar in nature. It is not a simile to say "Your fingers are like mine"; that would be a literal observation. Metaphor is a statement where one thing is described as something else, implying a comparison or resemblance between the two (Kennedy and Gioia, 2005). Personification involves attributing human-like characteristics or actions to animals, objects, or abstract concepts (Kennedy and Gioia, 2005). Hyperbole is a statement that is exaggerated to such an extreme extent that it is not believed to be true. It is also referred to as an overstatement, as it uses exaggeration to emphasize a point (Kennedy and Gioia, 2006). The irony, along with other tropes, is a pervasive aspect of human life. Irony refers to an expression where the intended meaning by the author or speaker is significantly different, often opposite, to what is literally stated (Bradford, 2022). A symbol is an object or word that represents more than its literal meaning. It can be found in various forms, such as government flags, religious symbols, objects with personal significance, logos, and even college sweatshirts. Symbols can be categorized into personal symbols (objects with personal meaning), public symbols (flags), and conventional symbols (using roads to represent life's journey to symbolize stages of life). Symbols are open to personal interpretation (Frank, 2002).

Overall, considering the aforementioned explanation, the writer asserts that the song lyrics from Paramore's album "This is Why" are a viable alternative source for teaching poetry. The songs stand out due to their compelling rhythm and the language used by the composer. The lyrics in this album not only provide entertainment but also convey valuable information. Reading and analyzing song lyrics can enhance students' knowledge of poetry, making it a valuable resource for their learning.

#### **e. Conclusion**

In the "This is Why" album by Paramore, the writer identified eleven different types of figures of speech. These include hyperbole, metaphor, symbol, personification, repetition, simile, irony, allusion, paradox, oxymoron and litotes. Through the analysis, a total of forty-three sentences containing figures of speech were found. Among them, three sentences featured hyperbole and simile, eighteen sentences contained metaphor, six sentence showcased symbol and irony, two sentence included personification, two sentences employed repetition, two



sentences used simile, one sentences incorporated allusion, one sentences featured repetition, one sentence utilized paradox, and one sentence displayed litotes. Metaphor emerges as the most dominant figure of speech in the lyrics of Paramore's "This is Why" album. Symbol and Irony, on the other hand, holds the second position with six instances found in the album's songs. Simile and hyperbole follows as the third most dominant, with three instances observed in Paramore's songs. Personification rank as the fourth most prevalent figures of speech in the lyrics. Lastly, allusion, repetition, paradox, oxymoron, and litotes are sparingly utilized in the song lyrics of the "This Is Why" album. Regarding the contribution to poetry teaching, the analysis of song lyrics can serve as an effective method for teachers, particularly when focusing on figures of speech. In using songs, learners are provided with the opportunity to express their own opinions and interpretations of the lyrics. This approach encourages active engagement and interpretation skills among students.

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